

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2015 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 354 (Calvert County Delegation)  
Environment and Transportation

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**Calvert County - Task Force to Study the Commemoration of Harriet Elizabeth Brown**

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This bill establishes the Task Force to Study the Commemoration of Harriet Elizabeth Brown. The task force must (1) study and make recommendations on the commemoration of Harriet Elizabeth Brown, such as renaming a State building or designating a State roadway in her honor; (2) hold public hearings to gather public input and recommendations; and (3) consider the cost-effectiveness of its findings before making its recommendations. By December 31, 2015, the task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2015, and terminates June 30, 2016.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Task force members can be reimbursed for travel expenses using existing resources; however, it is uncertain which State entity will process the reimbursements since no State agency is assigned to staff the task force.

**Local Effect:** Since no staffing agency is assigned in the bill, it is assumed that the members of the task force will provide their own staff to conduct the public hearings and produce the required report. Any expenses beyond travel expenses related to these duties will need to be absorbed by task force members or their organizations, some which are local entities; however, any costs are anticipated to be minimal.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## Analysis

**Background:** As noted in the preamble, Harriet Elizabeth Brown was a Calvert County school teacher from 1931 to 1973. During her employment as a teacher, she became aware that African American teachers were paid significantly less than their White counterparts with the same level of education and experience. In 1937, Ms. Brown enlisted the aid of a young attorney named Thurgood Marshall, then special counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (known as NAACP), to challenge the inequity of separate pay scales for public school teachers based on race. The landmark case was settled in Ms. Brown's favor by the Calvert County Board of Education on December 27, 1937, and was a turning point for salary equalization in the State of Maryland. Ms. Brown, a civil rights pioneer and long-time resident of the State of Maryland, died on January 1, 2009, at the age of 101.

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### Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Calvert County, Maryland State Archives, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 20, 2015  
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